

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3906
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

CONFIDENTIAL RABAT 5768

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT MO PINS

SUBJECT: STUDENT - TEACHER ARRESTS AND DEMONSTRATION AT FRENCH
EMBASSY

REF: RABAT 5691 (NOTAL)

1. OVER PAST SEVERAL DAYS EMBASSY HAS DEVELOPED FURTHER
INFORMATION CONCERNING STUDENT-TEACHER ARRESTS AND COOPERANT
DEMONSTRATION AT FRENCH EMBASSY.

2. EMBASSY NOW UNDERSTANDS THAT PROTEST AGAINST COOPERANTS'
INTERROGATION (REFTEL), WAS NOT PRIMARY REASON FOR FRENCH
EMBASSY DEMONSTRATION. MAIN PURPOSE OF GATHERING WAS TO
DRAMATIZE COOPERANTS' DEMANDS FOR BETTER PAY AND BENEFITS IN
LIGHT OF FORTHCOMING VISIT TO RABAT OF FRENCH GOVERNMENT COMMISSION
TO STUDY QUESTION. QUESTION OF INTERROGATION OF COOPERANTS WAS
RAISED AT A MEETING IN CASABLANCA PRIOR TO DEMONSTRATION, BUT LEADER-
SHIP OF COOPERANTS' UNION DECIDED THAT THIS NOT A MATTER TO BE
RAISED WITH FRENCH EMBASSY OR, PRESUMABLY, COMMISSION.
AT LEAST SOME OF COOPERANTS INTERROGATED ARE OF LEFTIST PERSUA-
SION WHO WERE QUITE OPEN OF THEIR SUPPORT OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS
ARRESTED.

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3. FRENCH EMBASSY HERE CLEARLY NOT INTERESTED IN MAKING AN ISSUE OF INTERROGATION OF COOPERANTS. FRENCH EMBASSY OFFICERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN FOR MOST PART INSISTED THAT DEMONSTRATION CONCERNED WAGE ISSUES ONLY AND WERE EXTREMELY RELUCTANT TO DISCUSS INTERROGATIONS. ONE MEMBER OF EMBASSY STAFF INDICATED THAT HIS COLLEAGUES WERE EMBARRASSED AND SOMEWHAT UNNERVED BY DEMONSTRATION EVEN THOUGH IT WAS FROM START TO FINISH PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY EVENT.

4. THERE HAS BEEN NO FURTHER PUBLICITY OF ARRESTS THEMSELVES AND WE WOULD EXPECT NO FURTHER WORD UNTIL SUCH TIME AS GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO BRING FORMAL CHARGES AGAINST THOSE DETAINED. WE HAVE NOW SEEN EXAMPLE OF ILAL AMAM TRACTS DISTRIBUTED (AT LEAST ONE EMBASSY HAS BEEN RECEIVING THEM REGULARLY). DOCUMENTS CONTAIN BITTER DENUNCIATIONS OF "HASSAN-ABDALLAH-DLIMI-CLIQUE" AND ARE CRITICAL OF GOM'S SAHARA RECOVERY CAMPAIGN. HOWEVER, SOME OF OUR SOURCES BELIEVE THE GROUP DID MUCH MORE THAN DISTRIBUTE TRACTS. POLITICAL PARTIES ARE TAKING A POSITION OF DISASSOCIATING THEMSELVES FROM GROUPS EVEN AS THEY DEPLORE ARRESTS.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT GOM, WHILE ANXIOUS NEUTRALIZE ILAL AMAN'S STRENGTH, IS NOT ALARMED BY IT SO FAR. ALTHOUGH POLITICAL PARTY SOURCES INSIST THAT NO REAL DIALOGUE BETWEEN PARTIES AND PALACE HAS BEGUN, MOST OTHERS BELIEVE THAT PLANS FOR BROADENING GOVERNMENT AND HOLDING ELECTIONS ARE STILL VERY MUCH ON KING'S MIND.

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